

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0024] of the specification as filed with the replacement paragraph set out below.

[0024] For a detailed description of the preferred embodiments of the invention, reference will now be made to the accompanying drawing (Figure 1) in which ~~the drawing~~ Figure 1 illustrates a comparison of the hydrothermal stability of supports.

Please replace paragraph [0028] of the specification as filed with the replacement paragraph set out below.

[0028] The structural promoters of the present invention include any elements suitable for fortifying the lattice structure of a refractory-oxide material. Suitable structural promoters include tungsten (W), tantalum (Ta), niobium (Nb), thorium (Th), germanium (Ge), uranium (U), tin (Sn), antimony (Sb), vanadium (V), hafnium (Hf), sodium (Na), potassium (K), boron (B), magnesium (Mg), silicon (Si), calcium (Ca), titanium (Ti), chromium (Cr), manganese (Mn), iron (Fe), cobalt (Co), nickel (Ni), copper (Cu), zinc (Zn), gallium (Ga), strontium (Sr), zirconium (Zr), barium (Ba) and the lanthanides, including lanthanum (La), cerium (Ce), praseodymium (Pr), neodymium (Nd), promethium (Pm), samarium (Sm), europium (Eu), gadolinium (Gd), terbium (Tb), dysprosium (Dy), holmium (Ho), erbium (Er), thulium (Tm), ~~ytterbium~~ ytterbium (Yb) and lutetium (Lu).

Please replace paragraphs [0054] and [0055] of the specification as filed with the replacement paragraphs set out below.

[0054] The following examples illustrate the improved hydrothermal stability of some of the preferred embodiments of the present invention. Three different samples were prepared according to the procedure described below: (1) an alumina support, (2) a cobalt-promoted alumina support, and (3) a zirconium-promoted alumina support. To compare the samples, the change in BET surface area for the alumina support after steam treatment with respect to BET surface area before steam treatment was compared to the corresponding change in BET surface area for the cobalt-promoted alumina support and the zirconium-promoted alumina support. The results are presented in ~~the drawing~~ Figure 1.

[0055] As can be seen in ~~the drawing~~ Figure 1, the cobalt-promoted alumina support and the zirconium-promoted alumina support experience less change in BET surface area than the bare alumina support, indicating increased lattice stability and increased hydrothermal stability relative to the bare alumina support. The zirconia-promoted alumina support appears to offer the best results at both 700°C and 900°C calcinations.

Please replace paragraph [0060] of the specification as filed with the replacement paragraph set out below.

[0060] The BET surface area of each support was measure both before and after the steam treatment. Results are presented in ~~the drawing~~ Figure 1.